

# Worksession

<b>Agenda Item #</b>	5
<b>Meeting Date</b>	April 9, 2007
<b>Prepared By</b>	Barbara B. Matthews City Manager
<b>Reviewed By</b>	

<b>Discussion Item</b>	Police Chief's Comprehensive Community Policing Strategy, including recommendation regarding Safe Takoma initiative
<b>Background</b>	Chief Ronald A. Ricucci assumed leadership of the Takoma Park Police Department on February 20, 2007. Since that time, he has sought input from a diverse group of individuals in formulating a comprehensive community policing strategy for the City of Takoma Park to ensure the department's responsiveness to all segments of the community. At the worksession, Chief Ricucci will share key elements of this strategy.
<b>Policy</b>	The Council has an interest in the protection and promotion of the safety of City residents, business owners/operators, and visitors to Takoma Park.
<b>Fiscal Impact</b>	<p>Chief Ricucci's comprehensive community policing strategy is predicated on a staffing level of 41 commissioned officers.</p> <p>Salary and benefit costs of the proposed crime analyst position total \$59,141. Expenditures for associated equipment, including a plotter, equal approximately \$20,000. The City Manager's proposed budget for FY08 assumes that the \$75,000 allocated in the FY07 budget to enhance cross-jurisdictional cooperation with the Metropolitan Police Department would be allocated to implement the Chief's recommendation to hire a crime analyst.</p>
<b>Attachments</b>	Overview of Crime Analysis Section of the Montgomery County Police Department
<b>Recommendation</b>	Provide feedback to Chief Ronald A. Ricucci on his comprehensive community policing strategy
<b>Special Consideration</b>	

# Memo

**To:** Barbara B. Matthews, City Manager  
**From:** Ronald A. Ricucci, Chief of Police  
**Date:** April 6, 2007  
**Re:** Comprehensive Community Policing Strategy

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Upon my appointment as Chief of Police, I began a complete review of the operations of the Police Department. At my request, all supervisors in the department provided me with briefing papers. In addition to my discussions with you, I have met with various squads and units within the department, including both civilian and sworn personnel. I have also met with members of the City Council, community leaders, City residents, and business owners/operators.

The current organizational structure of the Takoma Park Police Department provides for a Community Oriented Policing Team comprised of a sergeant and three police officers. Due to staffing shortages in prior years, the Team has rarely been staffed at this level. Presently, there are two officers assigned to it.

Rather than continuing the present specialized unit approach, I plan to broaden the Police Department's community oriented policing focus by including both sworn and civilian personnel. A five-year Strategic Plan will be developed, with input from departmental staff, employees of other City departments, City residents, business owners/operators, and anyone else who wishes to offer input.

To provide a higher level of service to the community, I plan to modify the organizational structure of the Police Department as well as the manner in which personnel will be deployed. Key elements of the plan include the following:

- Establishment of a street crimes unit comprised of three officers who will work covertly in plainclothes to determine street crime and narcotics violations. The unit will participate with the Montgomery County Narcotic Unit on narcotics investigations.
- Creation of a business district officer to establish a closer partnership with business owners/operators in Old Town, the Junction, the Takoma/Langley Crossroads, and the smaller commercial centers in the City. This officer would work closely with the Metropolitan Police Department and the Metro Transit Police to enhance the safety of those using the Metro as a means of transit.
- Hiring of a crime analyst to facilitate the sharing of information between the Takoma Park Police Department and other law enforcement agencies. In my discussions with the commanders of the law enforcement agencies bordering Takoma Park, all have

cited the lack of data from Takoma Park as an impediment to cross-jurisdictional efforts. The hiring of a crime analyst would also enhance the department's ability to provide information to City residents.

- Continued role of the patrol division as the front line against crime. Officers will be assigned to permanent beats, with an emphasis on becoming problem solvers in their patrol activities.
- Re-establishment of the Bike Unit, with one bike officer assigned to each patrol shift.
- Establishment of a community services officer position to provide assistance with various departmental programs such as Citizens' Police Academy, Youth Advisory Board, Business Watch, Neighborhood Watch, etc.

Full staffing of departmental positions is a critical element in implementing the plan outlined above. Every effort will be made to fill vacant positions with quality employees in order for the department to have the flexibility to establish new initiatives as warranted to meet the community's needs.

While there is no guarantee of success with these changes, my experience in law enforcement has shown that we can succeed if our managers and supervisors are held accountable and our personnel know what is expected of them. Our Police Department personnel are committed and dedicated to doing the best job possible. It is my job as their leader to provide the direction, guidance, resources, and tools to do their jobs.